



KING COUNTY

# VOTERS' PAMPHLET GUIDELINES FOR BALLOT MEASURES



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## King County Simplified Rules and Guidelines

### KING COUNTY LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET - REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Voter's pamphlets for elections, other than the General Election, are NOT automatically produced. A voter's pamphlet must be specifically requested by the governing authority of the jurisdiction, by ordinance or resolution, and fully paid for by the jurisdiction. An ordinance or resolution requesting a voters' pamphlet must be submitted to the Elections Office no later than forty-five days prior to the election date.

#### A. **INTRODUCTION:**

These simplified rules and guidelines are based on King County Public Rule Document No. ELE 9-1 series, "Local Voters' Information Pamphlet Administrative Rules" and are focused primarily on the requirements pertaining to the preparation and submission of pamphlet material for ballot measures. They are based in turn on the statutory provisions found in Chapter 29A.32, Revised Code of Washington (RCW)

#### B. **DEFINITIONS:**

1. "Local voters' pamphlet" or LVP shall mean a pamphlet prepared by the King County Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division containing locally prepared information on ballot measures and candidates for county elections and for other participating jurisdictions within King County. The voters' pamphlet contains information including but not limited to registration and voting procedures.
  2. "Jurisdiction" shall mean any city, town or district located within King County for which elections are held.
  3. "Participating jurisdiction" shall mean any jurisdiction participating in the publication and distribution of a King County local voters' pamphlet.
  4. "Explanatory statement" shall mean the statement prepared by the appropriate jurisdiction's attorney stating the effect of a ballot measure, if passed into law.
  5. "Director" shall mean the Director, King County Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division, or designee.
  6. "Deadline" shall mean the close-of-business for the Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division (4:30 p.m.), unless otherwise stated, of the day indicated.
  7. "Publication date" means the date on which the LVP material goes to the printer for publication, which shall be determined to be four weeks prior to the primary or election date.
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**C. ESTABLISHMENT OF STATEMENT COMMITTEES – DEADLINE:**

1. For each measure from a jurisdiction that is included in the LVP, the legislative authority of the jurisdiction shall formally appoint:
  - A committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' approval of the measure (the proponents) and
  - A committee to prepare arguments advocating voters' rejection of the measure (the opponents).
2. Each committee shall have no more than three members. However, a committee may seek the advice of any person or persons. Members shall be appointed from persons known to favor or oppose the measure as appropriate. Each committee should select a spokesperson for that committee.
  - a) If such persons are not immediately known, the jurisdiction should employ some formal means of notifying the public that members for the proponent or opponent committee are being sought.
  - b) Members should not be drawn from the legislative authority of the jurisdiction sponsoring the ballot measure, or from members of its staff, in order to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.
  - c) If the jurisdiction is unable to identify persons to serve on either or both statement committees, the jurisdiction shall notify the Director no later than the deadline date for committee appointments. Such notification shall detail the efforts made to establish the committee(s). A statement to that effect will be placed in the LVP.
3. Jurisdictions responsible for establishing committees to prepare arguments in favor of or in opposition to any ballot measure shall submit the names of the committee members, the spokesperson for the committee, and how that person can be readily contacted, not later than forty-five days before the primary or election.
4. Participating jurisdictions are responsible for providing appointed committee members with copies of the instructions, specifications, and deadlines contained herein regarding arguments and rebuttals.

**D. COMPOSITION:**

As required by state law, the LVP shall contain, as a minimum, the following information:

1. The ballot title of each measure to be considered.
  2. An explanatory statement prepared by the jurisdiction and approved by the jurisdiction's attorney describing the effect of the measure if passed.
  3. A local focus section prepared by the jurisdiction (optional).
  4. Arguments for and against each measure to be submitted by committees selected for that purpose.
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5. Rebuttals prepared by each of the committees in response to the arguments submitted by the opposing committee.

**E. DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION:**

1. The local focus section, when used, shall be filed with the Director no later than 45 days prior to the primary or election.
2. Arguments in favor of or in opposition to any ballot measure, prepared by a committee designated in accordance with state law (RCW 29A.32.060), shall be filed with the Director no later than three days after the deadline for appointing the committee.
3. Rebuttals, if any, shall be filed with the Director no later than two days after the deadline for submission of arguments. Arguments or statements in favor of or in opposition to a ballot measure prepared and filed pursuant to paragraph 2 above, shall be available to opposing ballot measure argument committees after 4:30 p.m. of the day the arguments are due, or sooner if arguments from both proponent and opponent are received. Rebuttals are not exchanged. They may be viewed at the Elections Office on request.
4. Once submitted and received in the Voters' Pamphlet Office, arguments and rebuttals may not be withdrawn or changed except as provided in Section H below.

**F. SPECIFICATIONS - STATEMENT FOR BALLOT MEASURES:**

1. Explanatory Statement: An explanatory statement shall be prepared for each measure included in the voters' pamphlet. It shall be prepared in block paragraph style, not to exceed 250 words in length, by the responsible jurisdiction and must be approved by the jurisdiction's attorney. The statement shall cover only the anticipated effect of the measure should it be passed into law. The statement shall not intentionally be an argument likely to create prejudice either for, or against, the measure.
  2. Arguments and Rebuttals
    - a. Limitations on the length of committee arguments are based upon the space available within the pamphlet. The general limitation on text length using block paragraph without indentation or the use of "bullets" is 200 words or less except 500 words may be used for municipal incorporation measures. Rebuttals shall be limited to 75 words or less.
    - b. The use of indentation and "bullets" to emphasize issues and to make the copy more readable is permissible, but will reduce the allowable text length proportionately. In the event of any question regarding length under these circumstances, the decision of the Director as to the length shall be final. The Director shall notify preparing committees if the text is excessive and shall be allowed to edit the text if time permits.
    - c. The name of the committee, or the committee members preparing the statement and a phone number where additional information on the argument may be obtained shall be added after the statements but shall not be included in the statement word counts. Committee members' titles shall not be included.
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**G. SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL:**

Submit materials to one of the following locations:

1. All material to be submitted to the Director, of the Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division, may be mailed or delivered, in-person or by delivery to:

*Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division  
Elections Section  
King County Administration Bldg., Room 553  
500 Fourth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104*

In person and by delivery between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 p.m.,  
workdays, Monday through Friday.

2. Voters' pamphlet materials, including arguments for or against a measure and the rebuttals may be sent directly via FAX to the Voters' Pamphlet Office at:

*King County Elections  
Attn: Voters' Pamphlet  
FAX Number 425-788-5889  
PHONE Number 425-788-7878*

**H. GENERAL PROVISIONS REGARDING SUBMITTED MATERIAL:**

1. By preparing and distributing a LVP, King County provides an opportunity to better inform the voting public about measures and candidates on the ballot. Arguments and statements prepared by committees for or against measures are the responsibility of the authors and are not considered to represent the position of the County regarding the measure, or of any material contained therein; nor is the County responsible for the validity or accuracy of the statements, arguments or rebuttals.
  2. Arguments for or against a measure, rebuttals, and explanatory statements will not be proof read for any errors in spelling, punctuation or syntax. The Director may, however, correct obvious typographical or punctuation errors.
  3. Late corrections to a proponent or opponent ballot measure statement will be accepted only if the opposite committee does not object to the correction being made.
  4. Explanatory statements, arguments, candidate statements for or against a measure, and rebuttal statements may be rejected if, in the opinion of the Director, any argument or statement offered for filing contains obscene, vulgar, profane, scandalous, libelous, defamatory, or treasonable matter; any language tending to provoke crime or a breach of the peace, or any language or matter the circulation of which through the mails is prohibited by any act of Congress. The committee or candidate submitting such a statement may appeal a rejection to the King County Prosecuting Attorney within five business days of rejection by filing an appeal with the Director. The Prosecuting Attorney will render a decision within five business days of the appeal. The decision of the Prosecuting Attorney shall be final.
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**I. DISTRIBUTION:**

1. Copies of the LVP shall be bulk mailed to each residence in the county for general elections and countywide special elections when authorized.
2. For elections involving less than the entire county and where a specific distribution is desired, copies of the LVP shall be mailed to each registered voter's residence within the jurisdictions served by LVP.
3. For special elections involving a vote-by-mail election, a copy of the LVP will be mailed to each registered voter unless, in the opinion of the Director, mailing to residences would be more efficient and economical.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Deadlines for Material to be submitted
2. Argument Committee Appointment Form
3. Election Dates for 2006
4. Sample Voters' Pamphlet Entries

Revised 11/22/05

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### DEADLINE DATES FOR KING COUNTY LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET

The following are the deadlines for the submission of material for the King County local voters' pamphlet (LVP) for the 2006 fall elections. Deadlines are as of 4:30 p.m. that day.

**NOTE:** Voters' pamphlets for elections, other than the General Election, are NOT automatically produced. A voters' pamphlet must be specifically requested by the governing authority of the jurisdiction, by ordinance or resolution, and fully paid for by the jurisdiction.

ITEM	WORD LIMIT	DEADLINE	DEADLINE
		Primary	General
<u>ORDINANCE OR RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ELECTION.</u> (The ballot measure)	-	August 4	September 22
<u>BALLOT TITLES:</u> (cities and towns only) Summary of the ballot measure as it will appear on the ballot.	75	August 4	September 22
<u>EXPLANATORY STATEMENT:</u> Discusses the effect of the measure if it passes into law. (Reviewed and approved by jurisdiction's attorney)	250	August 4	September 22
<u>COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:</u> Names of the persons appointed or selected to serve on the pro and con committees.	Use form provided	August 4	September 22
<u>ARGUMENTS FOR THE BALLOT MEASURE:</u> Written by the committee for the measure.	200 (500 - municipal incorporation)	August 8	September 26
<u>ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE BALLOT MEASURE:</u> Written by the committee against the measure.	200 (500 - municipal incorporation)	August 8	September 26
<u>AVAILABILITY OF ARGUMENTS:</u> Arguments prepared by the pro and con committees will be made available to the opposing committees for rebuttal after the close of business (4:30 p.m.) on these dates.	-	August 8	September 26
<u>STATEMENTS IN REBUTTAL:</u> (This is optional). Statements rebutting the argument made by the opposition. Rebuttals are not exchanged. They may be reviewed at the Elections Office upon request.	75	August 10	September 28

**KING COUNTY LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET****ARGUMENT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT FORM**

<b>JURISDICTION:</b>	<b>PROPOSITION:</b>

Print clearly and provide the correct spelling of the committee member's names.

**NOTE: A fax number is required for the exchange of committee arguments.**

**COMMITTEE ADVOCATION APPROVAL****COMMITTEE ADVOCATING REJECTION**

1. NAME:	1. NAME:
(SPOKESPERSON)	(SPOKESPERSON)
ADDRESS:	ADDRESS:
PHONE NO:	PHONE NO:
FAX NO:	FAX NO:

2. NAME:	2. NAME:
ADDRESS:	ADDRESS:
PHONE NO:	PHONE NO:
FAX NO:	FAX NO:

3. NAME:	3. NAME:
ADDRESS:	ADDRESS:
PHONE NO:	PHONE NO:
FAX NO:	FAX NO:

**APPOINTED ADVISORS SUPPORTING  
APPROVAL (OPTIONAL)****APPOINTED ADVISORS SUPPORTING  
REJECTION (OPTIONAL)**


I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE NAMED INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED AND HAVE CONSENTED TO SERVE AS INDICATED, AND THAT THE NAMES, TITLES, AND/OR ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD BE LISTED IN THE OFFICIAL LOCAL VOTERS' PAMPHLET IN THE MANNER SET FORTH.

\_\_\_\_\_  
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE